

which many of these centers are located (H.R. 1285, Nursing Relief Act for Disadvantaged Areas).

I have also authored legislation aimed to better educate our children (H.R. 2553, Responsible Education About Life Act in 2006) and eliminate health disparities (H.R. 3561, Healthcare Equality and Accountability Act and the Good Medicine Cultural Competency Act in 2003, H.R. 90).

We must continue research on treatments and antiretroviral therapies, as well as pursue a cure. We absolutely have to ensure that everyone who needs treatment receives it.

And we simply must increase awareness of testing, access to testing, and the accuracy of testing. Because we will never be able to stop this pandemic if we lack the ability to track it.

GUN VIOLENCE AND HOMICIDE

The final health challenge confronting the African-American community, and African-American males in particular, involves the issue of gun violence and homicide.

This must be a priority health issue for our community. Over 600,000 Americans are victimized in handgun crimes each year, and the African-American community is among the hardest hit.

It was only a little over a week ago that one of my constituents was, caught in a cross fire that ended his life.

Neither the mind nor the heart can contemplate a cause that could lead a human being to inflict such injury and destruction on fellow human beings.

Since 1978, on average, 33 young black males between the ages of 15 and 24 are murdered every six days. Three-quarters of these victims are killed by firearms.

In 1997, firearm homicide was the number one cause of death for African-American men ages 15–34, as well as the leading cause of death for all African-American 15–24 year olds. The firearm death rate for African-Americans was 2.6 times that of whites.

According to the Centers for Disease Control, the firearms suicide rate amongst African-American youths aged 10–19 more than doubled over a 15 year period. Although African-Americans have had a historically lower rate of suicide than whites, the rate for African-Americans 15–19 has reached that of white youths aged 15–19.

A young African-American male is 10 times more likely to be murdered than a young white male. The homicide rate among African-American men aged 15 to 24 rose by 66 percent from 1984 to 1987, according to the Centers for Disease Control.

Ninety-five percent of this increase was due to firearm-related murders. For African-American males, aged 15 to 19, firearm homicides have increased 158 percent from 1985 to 1993. In 1998, 94 percent of the African-American murder victims were slain by African-American offenders.

In 1997, African-American males accounted for 45 percent of all homicide victims, while they only account for 6 percent of the entire population.

It is scandalous that a 15-year-old urban African-American male faces a probability of being murdered before reaching his 45th birthday that ranges from almost 8.5 percent in the District of Columbia to less than 2 percent in Brooklyn.

By comparison, the probability of being murdered by age 45 is a mere three-tenths of 1 percent for all white males.

Firearms have become the predominant method of suicide for African-Americans aged 10–19 years, accounting for over 66 percent of suicides.

In Florida, for example, African-American males have an almost eight times greater chance of dying in a firearm-related homicide than white males. In addition, the firearm-related homicide death rate for African-American females is greater than white males and over four times greater than white females.

Nearly 50 percent of all homicide perpetrators give some type of prior warning signal such as a threat or suicide note. Among the students who commit a school-associated homicide, 20 percent were known to have been victims of bullying and 12 percent were known to have expressed suicidal thoughts or engage in suicidal behavior.

I have been working tirelessly in Congress to end gun violence by introducing legislation to assist local governments and school administrators in devising preventive measures to reduce school-associated violent deaths.

I have introduced sensible legislation to assist law enforcement departments, social service agencies, and school officials detect and deter gun violence.

In devising such preventive measures, at a minimum, we must focus on:

Encouraging efforts to reduce crowding, increase supervision, and institute plans/policies to handle disputes during transition times that may reduce the likelihood of potential conflicts and injuries.

Taking threats seriously and letting students know who and where to go when they learn of a threat to anyone at the school and encouraging parents, educators, and mentors to take an active role in helping troubled children and teens.

Taking talk of suicide seriously and identifying risk factors for suicidal behavior when trying to prevent violence toward self and others.

Developing prevention programs designed to help teachers and other school staff recognize and respond to incidences of bullying between students.

Ensuring that each school has a security plan and that it is being enforced and that school staff are trained and prepared to implement and execute the plan.

Again, thank you all for your commitment to working to find workable solutions to the health and wellness challenges facing our communities. I look forward to working with you in the months ahead to achieve our mutual goals.

IRAN

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Ms. STEFANIK). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2015, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. DESANTIS) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. DESANTIS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to discuss the situation with Iran.

President Obama recently said that criticism of the concessions that his administration is making to Iran "needs to stop." Well, I disagree. We in this body have a responsibility to speak the truth and to stop a dangerous deal.

Take a step back a little bit from some of the recent hullabaloo about

whether Iran has the same understanding of the deal as the United States does. It is true, if you listen to the Ayatollah, he basically said the deal basically represents a complete surrender on everything from day one; and the administration, when they put out their fact sheet, what they put out was different.

Here is, I think, a fundamental problem with this. Even if you take the administration's talking points as the meeting of the minds, even if you assume that that will be written down and memorialized, and even assume that Iran keeps the various components of the deal, the fact of the matter is this: this framework provides international legitimacy for Iran's nuclear infrastructure, and it allows Iran to use advanced centrifuges immediately.

Now, that was something that just a few years ago was thought to be totally outside the realm of what was acceptable. I think the thought amongst U.S. policymakers going back several administrations as well as other friendly countries was, look, this is a theocratic, jihadist regime in the Middle East that is sitting on centuries' worth of oil and gas. They don't need nuclear power for peaceful purposes, certainly, so why would we allow them to pursue a nuclear program knowing the ideology of the regime, knowing the threats that they have made to Israel and to the United States? Of course they don't get a nuclear program, and yet under this framework, their nuclear infrastructure is legitimized.

The sanctions relief that we are talking about is worth billions and billions of dollars to Iran. It will give Iran additional lifeblood to foment jihad and to expand its influence in the Middle East and beyond. So just know, I mean, even if you were somehow getting them to dismantle their nuclear program, when you talk about the leading state sponsor of terrorism, any sanctions relief they get is not going to go to benefit the Iranian people. That is going to be plowed into Iran doing dastardly deeds.

It is interesting, when you talk about the sanctions, and I know the Ayatollah said: Look, the sanctions are gone. As soon as that agreement is signed, they are gone.

The administration says: Oh, no. We will get rid of the sanctions as Iran complies; and if Iran cheats, we will snap back the sanctions.

The problem is that is extremely unlikely because what is going to be done, the international sanctions are going to be relaxed and then if, down the road, Iran cheats, the idea that you are going to be able to snap your fingers and get all these other countries onboard to be able to reimpose sanctions is really a fantasy.

In fact, just today brought news that Russia is resuming sales of the S-300 missile system to Iran. That had been something that they had stopped years ago. That is going to be business for Russia. It is going to be something

that is going to be a huge boon to Iran in terms of protecting its nuclear infrastructure from a potential attack. It is also interesting: Russia is the country that is supposed to store Iran's uranium, yet here they are doing business.

So I think it is going to be very difficult to snap back international sanctions.

If you were going to use sanctions in that way, the sanctions that you would want, you would want to come to Congress and say, "Hey, Congress, you relieve sanctions, they are going to do this; if they don't do it, then you snap back," because they know the Congress will reimpose the sanctions. And we are eager to do that, even right now.

You are not going to snap back international sanctions. So I think Iran understands that, and I think they know that once those sanctions are removed, that is going to be a continual lifeblood to them and they will be able to cheat on the agreement if they think that is what is in their best interest.

I think one of the troubling aspects of this deal, of this framework, is that the President himself, you know, a year and a half ago, laid down some red lines. He said we know certain things need to be true in agreement. Iran does not need to have an underground, fortified facility like at Fordo. He said they don't need a heavy water reactor like they have at Arak, and he said they don't need any type of advanced centrifuges if they are going to have a peaceful program.

But if you look under the announced framework, even if what the administration says is true, Fordo lives on. They say it is going to be a nuclear research facility. I am not sure why you need to have a nuclear research facility fortified underground to prevent an airstrike if you are just doing peaceful research.

Arak will still be there as a heavy water reactor, and of course Iran will have thousands of centrifuges. These are centrifuges that are not necessary to have a peaceful program.

So those are red lines that were laid down and that have been crossed.

The military sites, is there going to be any unfettered access to Iran's military sites? I think the answer seems to be absolutely not. Certainly what Iran has said, that is totally out of the question from their perspective, but it is not even clear under the administration's framework whether those military sites will be sites that inspectors can access.

And we know that in the past, in 2002, the only reason we were able to figure out that they were doing nuclear work at one of their military sites is because Iranian opposition forces, or folks who were opposed to the regime, filled us in. But that was not something that any inspectors had access to.

I think another really significant flaw in the deal is that, let's just say Iran looks at it and says: Well, if we cheat, maybe they will reimpose sanc-

tions. We think it is unlikely, but we don't want to kind of take that risk. They have an incentive, if they want the bomb, to keep the deal because, after a 10- to 13-year period, everything is going to be gone.

So if they keep the deal, given the amount of nuclear infrastructure they are allowed to keep, they are going to be able to build a bomb at the end of that 10-or 13-year period, and that is totally outside the realm of what is ever thought to be acceptable.

Here you have a country that is very patient. They have a very, very serious ideology that they are hell-bent on pursuing. And if they have to wait 10 or 13 years before they are able to acquire a bomb, they may make that calculation: Hey, we will just keep the deal, and we are going to be home free.

I think the longer that that happens, I think you are going to be in a situation where that may make a lot of sense for them, and I think the international community will be much less inclined to want to do anything at the end of that 10- or 13-year period.

It is interesting to me, just looking at how this has unfolded. When the Ayatollah goes out and says: Death to America; we are not going to make any concessions—all this—the President is asked by the press, well, the Ayatollah is out there saying that. And he says: Well, look, he has his hard-liners he has to pacify. We are not really worried about that. That is just for domestic political consumption.

It is interesting because when Prime Minister Netanyahu was in a political campaign and he made a comment about the infeasibility of a two-state solution, given the situation in the Middle East, the administration really hung that on him. And they said: Oh, he said it. We are going to have to re-evaluate our posture at the United Nations. We may go international to try to impose some type of two-state settlement on that situation. And there, they were absolutely not willing to cut Prime Minister Netanyahu any slack.

So they cut the Ayatollah of Iran, a guy that has a lot of American blood on his hands, more slack than they will cut the Prime Minister of Israel. That, to me, is just extremely frustrating.

I think that when you hear people who will defend the framework, they will say, "Either you support this framework or you want a major war," and I think that that is a straw man, but I think that it is a straw man just simply more than the fact that a lot of people think that there are things we could do to get a better deal.

But put that aside. A bad deal makes war more likely because what you are going to see are countries in the Middle East react to Iran building a bomb. They are going to react to Iran's designs for the region. We see Iran; they are the leading patron of Hezbollah in Lebanon, Assad in Syria, the Hamas terrorists in the Gaza Strip, the Houthis in Yemen, and, of course, the Shiite militias in Baghdad and in other parts of Shiite Iraq.

People see that—the Sunni regimes see that, and they are going to respond—and you will end up with a potentially catastrophic arms race in the most volatile region in the world.

The final point I would just make, and I have some of my colleagues here. We wanted to get some folks here who had served the country in uniform, served in the Iraq or Afghanistan campaigns.

□ 2045

The reason is because I think that anyone who has served in those conflicts knows that, at least I can say for Iraq, probably the number one source of deaths for U.S. servicemembers in Iraq came at the hands of Iranian-backed groups. Maybe not the most. It was probably pretty close, certainly hundreds of deaths, maybe as many as 1,500 deaths for groups that would explode these huge EFP bombs that would maim and kill indiscriminately. They were never really held to account for that. That brought a lot of anguish to a lot of American families who don't have their loved ones coming home as a result of that despicable regime.

So, Madam Speaker, this is not a regime that wants to be a good neighbor. They don't want to be part of a peaceful international order. It is a regime dedicated to the ideology of jihad. They have proven time and time again that they are interested and that they are willing to kill Americans with impunity.

With that, I yield to the gentleman from New York (Mr. ZELDIN), a friend of mine and a veteran who in just a short time has really, really been powerful in speaking the truth about this deal and about the failures of American policy vis-a-vis close allies of ours such as Israel.

Mr. ZELDIN. Thank you, Mr. DESANTIS. Thank you for your leadership on this critically important issue. I also appreciate your pointing out the hypocrisy of the Obama administration having nothing to say as the Ayatollah, the people of Iran, and the leadership of the Iranian Government talk about death to America, and this President does nothing, excusing it—it is okay because of the hard-liners in Iran. Yet he will be critical of the Israeli Prime Minister, who is speaking of the lack of viability of a two-state solution. I really appreciate your leadership on all of these issues and pointing out the very hypocritical position.

Madam Speaker, I am here today to articulate some of my concerns with the current status of the Iran nuke talks. Just recently, the President announced a framework agreement with Iran. At that time he released a fact sheet. That fact sheet, within 24 hours, saw the Iranian Foreign Minister going on his Twitter feed disputing that fact sheet and calling it just spin. Both sides, the Obama administration and the Iranian Government, are both spinning in different directions for their own domestic politics what isn't even in agreement.

An agreement requires a meeting of the minds. When you announce an agreement and both sides are disputing what the terms of that agreement are, there is no agreement. I don't know if anyone believes that the negotiators purposely left off a signature block on that fact sheet.

Let's talk about what is not included: Iran's state sponsorship of terrorism, Iran blowing up mock USS warships, talking about the need to erase Israel from the map, Iran's development of ICBMs, and overthrowing foreign governments. These aren't even part of the negotiations. Nothing is being reported to the American people about how individuals who are U.S. citizens are being wrongfully held in captivity by the Iranian Government. This President's tactics with these negotiations, regardless of who the next President of the United States will be, these tactics are cutting off the leverage of that next President who may be emboldened in ways that this President isn't to tackle those challenges of the ways Iran sponsors terrorism throughout the Middle East and around the globe.

These talks are on pace to trigger a nuclear arms race in the Middle East. Iran is not negotiating in good faith, and they smell American weakness, not American strength.

The Obama administration believes that the only option is to cut a deal just to cut a deal. This President should instead, with strength and courage as the leader of the free world, be bringing the Iranians to their knees. That is what strength looks like. If you want to change sanctions, strengthen them. Don't weaken them.

Madam Speaker, in 2009, the Iranians were emboldened, contesting what was supposed to be a democratic election that was widely viewed as being full of corruption. Where was President Obama in 2009 when this opportunity presented itself for the Iranian people while oil was \$100 a barrel? Our President could have exercised leadership then, and we would not even be here today. The President says that the only option is to cut this deal just to cut a deal.

I don't buy that there aren't other options to pursue. As I talk to colleagues, really, on both sides of the aisle, sharing concern with the direction of these nuke talks, there is resolve and commitment to find a third strategy. If that time comes, where the President of the United States believes he must threaten the use of dropping a bomb, he must be prepared to do it and threaten to drop 20 more. If that time in the future comes where this President or the next has to then drop another bomb, threaten to drop 50 more. Our enemies do not respect weakness; they only respect strength.

But today as we stand here in this stage of these Iran nuke talks, I stand with my colleagues who know that there is a third option that this President is not telling the American people about for his own domestic politics.

I challenge our President with strength to bring the Iranian Government to their knees. You are the leader of the free world. Act like it.

Mr. DESANTIS. Madam Speaker, I thank my friend from New York. I think those are great points. We are going to have some good debates here in the Congress. I don't think that having done this deal—I guess it was the day after April Fools'. We thought it was going to be April Fools', and now this being the first night back, we are just beginning.

At this time, I yield to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. COLLINS), another veteran and another friend of mine.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. I appreciate the gentleman from Florida yielding.

Madam Speaker, this is an important debate, and I know with the many decisions that you have in Florida and other things going on, what amazes me is, as was just stated, that I am not sure what the President's goal is here. The reason I believe, that most of us believe, that Iran even decided to negotiate was the fact that sanctions worked, that they were struggling under those sanctions, that they were having to deal with the reality that the world did not want them to have nuclear capability.

I am telling you, at this point, what is disturbing to me is, I am tired of this administration, this President, trying to earn accolades of the world on the back of Israel. They cannot continue to do that. Israel is the one that is suffering here. Israel will be the one that is at the point of, the tip of the spear. And for those who have served, we know that.

We know that Iran, as my friend from Florida stated earlier, Iran was behind and is behind most of the terrorism in the world many times in the world today. But yet this administration turns a blind eye because they believe that under the cloak of diplomacy that Iran will come to the table. It was not that Iran came to the table under the cloak of diplomacy. Iran came to the table because they were suffering because sanctions were working.

So, last week, the President gave an interview discussing the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, the deal struck by Iran and the P5+1 nations over Iran's nuclear program. More than a few things the President said during the course of the interview raised some red flags for me and should raise some uneasiness among the American people.

The first item of concern is the inability on the part of the administration to get a concession from Iran to cease its uranium enrichment program. The very thing that most of us in Congress have said is they need to cease this idea. They need to cease their pursuit of a nuclear program. We didn't get concessions.

The President said during the interview that in 13 to 15 years Iran will

have the ability to develop the necessary fissile material to develop a nuclear weapon, and there will be little to nothing the international community can do to stop Iran. I am sorry, Mr. President, you will be out of office, and you will not be able to utter anything but regret at that statement because in 10 to 15 years, if they have that capability, then the rest of the world has to deal with it. Where will you be, Mr. President? A private citizen, not in a chance when you could actually do something. Stand up while you can.

We learned through this interview that the goal of the current framework isn't to end Iran's ability to reach the capacity to build a nuclear weapon but only to suspend their ability for a short time. In the framework the administration presented to the world, Iran's restriction on producing enough highly enriched uranium to build a bomb will only persist for 10 years. After 10 years, what sanctions will still be in place to bring Iran back to the negotiating table?

The framework also doesn't sit well with our allies in the region. They have understandable concerns over the U.S. getting cozy with an Iranian regime that is becoming more influential.

Apparently, the President feels that the U.S.-Israel relationship is a casual matter. When asked, Should Iran recognize Israel's right to exist? the President responded with a smile. I am sorry. As one who sat in this Chamber just a few weeks ago and heard from Benjamin Netanyahu about the importance of this problem right now with Iran, I am not one who responds with a smile when it becomes on Israel's independence and right to exist.

Until Iran acknowledges that, then nothing should be on the table. Israel should exist. It is our most important ally, and we should stand with them. For the President not to realize that is a tragedy among American life. Iran has declared that Israel should be wiped off the face of the Earth, and the President feels it is appropriate to smile about this? Excuse me. Why is he smiling about a country that wants to wipe off our most important ally?

Israel is in the most precarious position when it comes to Iran developing a nuclear device. Iran has the ability to target Israel through the use of a ballistic missile or on the ground or by one of its proxies, such as Hezbollah. The relationship between U.S. and Israel has to be so close as to not allow a crack to form. The current P5+1 framework deal is causing fissures in what has always been an ironclad relationship.

You see, I will continue to criticize a deal that puts Israel at risk and will fight to maintain Israel's qualitative military edge in the region. The JCPA shows why it is necessary for Congress to be involved in this process. It is the role of Congress to ensure, alongside the executive branch, that our national security and the safety of our allies are maintained.

Madam Speaker, unless this administration realizes that there are some countries that, unfortunately, through their own actions, choose to say we want to be outside the norm of relations, when they choose to say Israel should not exist, when they choose to continue to fund terrorism around the world, then they should not be allowed a prestigious seat at the table to get to dictate terms. That is wrong. Until this administration realizes it, shame on this administration. If they continue to want to win public accolades for their diplomatic action, then, unfortunately, this administration is doing so on the back of Israel. I, for one, and I know many others here, will not stand for that.

Mr. President, this is not a place to try and win points on the back of our strongest ally. Listen to what the Prime Minister said. And when you listen, then you will understand that this is a bad deal. It is time to walk away.

Mr. DESANTIS. I thank my friend from Georgia for that.

Madam Speaker, it is true. This was a very simple request that was asked of the President: Did you talk to the Ayatollah's people? Did you talk to the Iranian negotiators about just recognizing Israel's right to exist as a Jewish state? So this way, this whole idea of "death to Israel, death to America" shows that Iran is serious about having peace, and the President dismissed that out of hand. He said, Look, you are not going to change the nature of a regime by asking them to recognize the right of Israel to exist.

The problem, though, with that explanation is that the whole real underpinning of this deal, I think, rests on the assumption that Iran's regime might change because when you are sunseting it in 10 or 13 years, if the regime hasn't changed by then, well, guess what? You are at a nuclear Iran at that point. So I think that they assume that there is going to be some change over the next decade. Otherwise, that sunset provision makes even less sense than it does already.

I also just know one more thing. Who is cheering this deal? The head of Hezbollah, the Lebanese terrorist group. This was a group that Iran started funding shortly after the Iranian revolution in 1979. They were responsible for killing over 240 U.S. marines at the marine barracks in Beirut, Lebanon, in 1983, and they have been instrumental in launching attacks against Israel ever since.

□ 2100

Here is what the head of Hezbollah said:

As a result of this deal, Iran will become richer and wealthier and will also become more influential.

He said:

This will reinforce the position of Iran's allies. A stronger and wealthier Iran in the coming phase will be able to stand by its allies and especially the Palestinian resistance more than at any other time in history.

Hezbollah sees a stronger Iran as a result of this deal. They see more support for terrorist groups such as Hamas and the Gaza Strip, and I think the logical inference is they see more attacks against Israel as a result of this deal. That is very, very troubling.

I would like to take this time now to yield to the gentleman from Pennsylvania, SCOTT PERRY, another good friend of mine, a veteran from Pennsylvania, and a really strong voice on national security.

Mr. PERRY. Madam Speaker, I appreciate the efforts of my good friend from Florida to bring this issue to the floor and start the discussion.

Of course, when we hear from the administration that, somehow, because we are having the discussion because, somehow, we dare to question that we are on the wrong side of history, that we are unpatriotic, and literally, in many cases, the administration is trying to equate those in this Chamber, in this body, who would have a discussion and would call into question some of the tenets of this framework and then this agreement—which we didn't know much about—that we are tantamount to the same thing as the hardliners in Iran, the hardliners that had horrific human rights violations over the course of the last 50 years, as far as America is concerned, and literally do unspeakable things. That is breathtaking to me.

The problem is, among other things, that we are skeptical because our negotiating partner in this, Iran, is not trustworthy, simply not trustworthy. Just picture yourself and your own family, if you were negotiating an infraction within your own family, and while you were discussing the infraction, that member of your family was doing the exact same thing that you were discussing about the cheating. That is exactly what happened, Madam Speaker.

During the discussion, during this negotiation, we found an undisclosed site in Iran, and we don't know how many more there are. It was undisclosed. They said, Oh, well, yeah, sorry about that; you can take a look now, I suppose.

But how many more are there? Why would we trust someone like that? Why would we trust someone, knowing the track record over the last 35 or 40 years of this country, of this nation?

I think Americans need to know where the negotiation started on both sides—what were Iran's requirements, what were the United States' requirements—because we hear this is a good deal. We understand from the administration that it is a good deal, but we want to know it is a good deal with our own eyes.

We want to see it. We want to think about it. We want to internalize it. We want to have an opportunity to ruminate on it and sleep on it and look at our children and think about our grandchildren in the world they are going to live in and think about wheth-

er this is a good deal. We are told: No, it is a good deal, take my word for it.

We don't know where negotiations started and ended for the most part, but some things, we do know. We do know that 2 years ago—heck, a year ago, enriching uranium for Iran was unforgivable, it was not allowed not only by the United States, but by the community of nations, by the United Nations.

Now, just with this framework, we have legitimized not hundreds of centrifuges, but tens of thousands of centrifuges. Meanwhile, countries around the globe, across the globe, have peaceful nuclear programs and don't have any centrifuges.

That makes one wonder—not a nuclear scientist, not a physicist, don't work at a reactor down at your local power plant—but if that is true, why did they need them? Why would we have agreed to that? We are right to be skeptical.

Iran practices strategic delay. At this point, Rouhani, the guy that wrote this book, who lauded himself for duping the West in other negotiations, is at the top of the heap right now.

You wonder why people in this body—forget people in this body. What about the vast majority of Americans that are skeptical? This is their voice. We are not necessarily only speaking for ourselves.

We are speaking for our constituents and the majority of Americans that say "hold on" to the administration. You say it is a good deal, but let's look with our own eyes because of these things, because the negotiators that negotiated the nuclear deal with North Korea that was going to disallow them to have nuclear weapons, they are the same negotiators that we have now in many cases; and, oh, by the way, in case you haven't kept up on current events, North Korea has nuclear weapons. So is it really prudent and proper for us to be skeptical? Is it prudent and proper for us to ask questions?

The biggest situation here, the biggest part of this is that there can be no mistakes. There is no margin of error with nuclear weapons. If one or two terrorists gets set free from Guantanamo and gets back out on the battlefield, that is regrettable; that is unacceptable, but that is very different than a nuclear blast.

Unfortunately, for Israel, they are close. We live thousands and thousands of miles away, but Israel is described by their enemies that would have this nuclear weapon as a one-bomb country because that is all it will take and it will all be over for that little country.

Now, you might wonder: Okay, well, certainly, Israel, that is bad for them, but why should we care so much?

Yeah, it is Israel, but they are over there, and we are over here, which begets the next question: Why are intercontinental ballistic missiles not included in the negotiation?

Ask yourself: What is the need for intercontinental ballistic missiles?

Well, I will tell you if you don't know. It is to deliver armament. What would that armament be? Well, that would be a nuclear warhead. You don't need one to get to Israel, folks. You need one of those to get to the United States.

These folks call Israel the Little Satan. Madam Speaker, you know who the Great Satan is; that is us. If this is so good, if this is so obviously good, why isn't that included in the negotiation, in the agreement, in the framework? Look, we are just foolish Americans, but it seems to make sense to us that that should be there.

You have got to ask yourself—I have heard the administration say: Well, during the duration of this Presidential term, we can be assured there will be no nuclear weapon in Iran.

Well, thank goodness for that; but what about the rest of us that are going to plan on living out the fullest part of our lives and our children and our grandchildren that are worried past the next 2 years? Ten to 15 years is a blink of the eye, is a moment in history. That is still too short.

Never is the right answer. Never is the right answer for people and nations that act like Iran.

Now, I heard recently that the administration said that they might let Congress express themselves. I thought about that—express themselves. I don't know where that verbiage came from, but it seems to me—I am looking at my rule book here. It is the recipe which we follow to run the country. It says here, under article II, section 2, regarding the President:

He shall have power, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate, to make treaties, provided two-thirds of the Senators present concur.

Now, if you wonder what a treaty is, just go and look it up in the dictionary. It is an agreement. I keep hearing about this is a framework for a historic agreement.

Folks, ladies and gentlemen, citizens, this is an agreement between the citizens of the United States and Iran, and the President is encumbering you when he signs this to everything therein, whether you agree with it or not.

We understand we have representative government, but that is why the Congress is supposed to be involved. That is why article II, section 2 says the Senate must provide advice and consent, so that your wishes are heard, so that your concerns are heard, not so that one guy, one person, makes a decision for the entire country on issues that are so important.

Let's talk about other issues of like importance. There is strong precedent, historical precedent, for congressional review of nonproliferation: three strategic arm reduction treaties, START treaties with Russia; the Nonproliferation Treaty; the Biological Weapons Convention; the Chemical Weapons Convention; the Strategic Offensive Reduction Treaty; the U.S.-India Civilian Nuclear Cooperation Agreement in 2008; and the civilian nuclear energy

agreements with Vietnam and Taiwan submitted for congressional review by this President in 2014.

If it is okay for them, why is this one any different? I would say to you that, recently, we heard that the country is stronger when the Congress and the administration work together. That was in reference to the authorization for the use of military force to confront ISIS.

Now, ISIS is a regional threat in that portion of the world that might become a growing cancer outside its bounds. I guess it is; but what is more important than nuclear war? If it is good enough for an AUMF with ISIS, why doesn't it apply here?

Finally, with your indulgence, Madam Speaker, we are told that this is a good deal and we should just trust the administration. With all due respect, I think it is important to review the recent foreign policy issues and the record. I am just going to highlight a couple of events that you might be familiar with.

The Syrian red line, the red line in Syria for the use of chemical weapons—we drew a red line, and then we watched it violated a dozen times before we said something, and then we backed off. Now, we are actually talking about having discussions and some kind of an agreement with Bashar al-Assad. That didn't work out too well.

Russia, they are doing whatever they want to in Ukraine. We have convinced the Ukrainians to dismantle their nuclear program, saying that we would be there for them if they were ever attacked, and we are nowhere. I served in Iraq and so did my good friend from Florida, and we think about all the lives and the energy and the hardship lost in Iraq. I think you can hardly call that a success under this current administration.

Afghanistan, we were staying. We were going. We were staying. We were going. That was hardly a success in my mind.

Egypt, a great wellspring of democracy where we chose the wrong side, and the Egyptian people had to choose the correct side. The Iranian green revolution, when they tried to rise up against oppression, and America turned its eyes and turned its face. Libya, where we helped overthrow a dictator, and, now, we have a failed state—and Yemen, the model of success for counterterrorism.

What about the exchange of Bowe Bergdahl for five terrorists? I mean, I don't mean to be overly and hypercritical, Madam Speaker, but it just seems to me, if future performance is indicated by past performance, we have a right to be skeptical.

All we are saying is it is right and it is our duty to question and to make sure that this is, indeed, good for the American people.

If it is good, then the administration should have no problem showing it to us and allowing us to vet it, like so many other historical precedents have.

The greatness of it will be obvious to the American people and their Representatives, their Representatives here in this Hall and the Hall across the building.

With that, I thank the gentleman.

Mr. DESANTIS. I thank my friend.

I think the gentleman from Pennsylvania did a good job of putting this all into a broader perspective in terms of this administration's approach to the world.

I think, if you look around the world, there are probably two countries that we have better relations with than when this President took office; and I think, almost uniformly, everywhere else, we are worse off.

Cuba, we have much closer relationships now. The President shakes the hand of Raul Castro, a blood-stained hand, a hand that has suppressed thousands and thousands of people, that has killed the sinners, that has caused thousands of people to flee in shark-infested waters to try to reach the shore of Florida; but the President is doing business with him, not helping the Cuban people. You actually see political repression has increased since we have changed policies, but the President seems fine with that.

Then Iran, we talk with Iran a lot more than we ever have. The question is: Is that a good thing? I think the answer is a dance-with-the-devil foreign policy has really never been tried before, and I think the chance of it succeeding is almost zero.

Part of the problem we see with this framework, I think, is that it is symptomatic of a larger failure to properly address the hostile actors throughout the world.

Goodness gracious, we need to look at our allies like Israel, like democracies in Europe, and they need to know that we are going to stand with them. I think we have an approach to the world right now where our allies can't depend on us and our adversaries don't really fear us. I think that is a bad approach, and I think, unfortunately, it is an approach that is going to invite more danger rather than keep us out of trouble.

I appreciate all my friends who came and made great comments. The President said recently that the criticism of this deal needs to stop.

Mr. President, we are not going to stop. We are going to be here; we are going to make the case on behalf of the American people, and we are going to be urging the Congress to speak loudly and clearly on behalf of American security.

Madam Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Mr. RUIZ (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today through April 16 on account of paternity leave.